MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY

STUDENT ID NO

MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY

FINAL EXAMINATION

TRIMESTER 2, SESSION 2016/2017

MLA1113 – MEDIA AESTHETICS

(All Sections / Groups)

03 MARCH 2017
3.00 PM – 5.00 PM
(2 Hours)

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS

1. This question paper consists of SIX (6) pages including this page. This paper contributes 40% to your final marks for the subject.

2. The duration of the examination is 2 hours (120 minutes) only.

3. This question paper consists of TWO sections:
   Part 1 True or False - Answer **ALL** questions
   Part 2 Short Essays - Answer only **FOUR** of **SIX** questions

4. Please print **ALL** your answers clearly in the **ANSWER BOOKLET** provided.

Part 1 TRUE or FALSE **(10 x 2) 20%**

Answer all questions in this section and print your answer clearly in the ***Answer Booklet.***

1. Aesthetic judgement relies on our ability to discriminate at a sensory level. But, it usally goes beyond sensory discrimination.

   TRUE OR FALSE? (2 pts)

2. Subjective aesthetics holds that judgment is personal, unchangeable, and challengeable, and that all individual responses are equally valid.

   TRUE OR FALSE? (2 pts)

3. "In the electric age we wear all mankind as our head" is one of McLuhan's famous quotes.

   TRUE OR FALSE? (2 pts)

4. Mechanical reproduction heightens authenticity, since we can now reproduce the work of art without limit. Hence, to Benjamin, the work of art is now increasing its aura.

   TRUE OR FALSE? (2 pts)

5. Relative aesthetics claims that aesthetic value should be derived from the interaction between the subjective response of the viewer and the intrinsic qualities of the art, design & multimedia forms/products.

   TRUE OR FALSE? (2 pts)

6. Time, in a sense, has ceased and space has vanished. Like primitives, we now live in a global village of our own making, a simultaneous happening. The global village is not created by the motor car or even by the airplane. It is created by instant electronic information movement.

   TRUE OR FALSE? (2 pts)

Continued .....

7. What gives the works of art a magical AURA is it's authenticity, originality, uniqueness, irreplaceable, and most of all, it's unreproducibility. In other words, it cannot be copied or reproduce mechanically.

TRUE OR FALSE? (2 pts)

8. Benjamin wrote, "For the first time in the process of pictorial reproduction, photography freed the hand of the most important artistic functions which henceforth devolved only upon the eye looking into a lens. Since the eye perceives more swiftly than the hand can draw, the process of pictorial reproduction was accelerated so enormously that it could keep up with sound"

TRUE OR FALSE? (2 pts)

9. Trancoding - New media in general can be thought of as consisting of two distinct layers – the "cultural layer" and the "computer layer".

TRUE OR FALSE? (2 pts)

10. Modularity - This principle can be called the "fractal structure of new media." Just as a fractal has the same structure on different scales, a new media object has the different modular structure throughout.

TRUE OR FALSE? (2 pts)

Continued .....

Part 2 Short Essays **(4 x 20) 80%**

Attempt only FOUR (4) of the following SIX (6) questions.
Answer all sections within the question and print your answer clearly in the Answer Booklet. Always define keywords and provide examples to elaborate your discussion.

Question 1:

a) Describe the five main themes of **Romantic Art** discussed in class.

(10 pts)

b) Discuss your understanding of the Romantic Art and Expressionism in relation with the concept of **Subjectivist Aesthetics**.

(10 pts)

Question 2:

Walter Benjamin, in his landmark article "***The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction***", wrote extensively about photograph and film.

a) Discuss what he wrote on photography and film.

(14 pts)

b) How does it relate to the movie "**Shadow Magic**" by Ann Hu that you watched in class?

(6 pts)

Question 3:

All new media objects, whether created from scratch on computers or converted from analog media sources, are composed of digital code; they are numerically represented.

a) Define and discuss the principle of **numerical representation** in your own words.

(6 pts)

b) Give relevant examples of this principle by using your own digital artworks e.g. animations, websites, digital installation artworks, product designs, virtual spaces, and others.

(14 pts)

Continued .....

Question 4:

Describe and explain three different concepts of program in Viém Flusser's understanding on photography. Please give relevant examples to illustrate your understanding.

(20 pts)

Question 5:

With reference to Jeff Wall's photo (see **Figure 1**) and its production process, describe and explain Jean Baudrillard's concept of simulacrum.

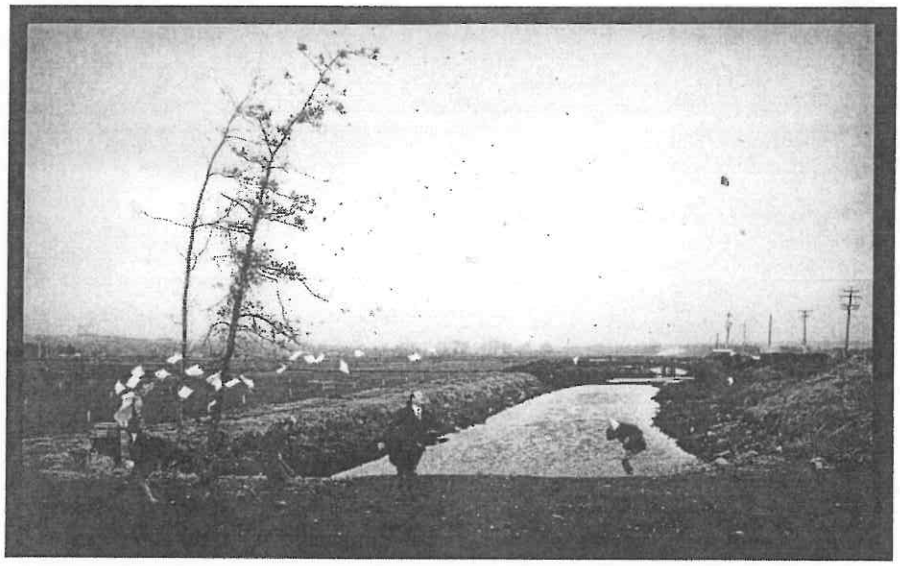

Figure 1 Wall, Jeff. *A Sudden Gust of Wind (after Hokusai)*. N.p., 1993. Print.

(20 pts)

Continued .....

Question 6:

With reference to paragraph 1 and 2 of Kittler's thesis below, discuss and elaborate about the relation between technology and body. Please give relevant examples in your discussion.

Para. 1 All that remained for Socrates and his enthusiastic interlocutors (enthusiastic because they felt flattered) was to explain what the soul itself was. And lo and behold: a definition of the soul was immediately offered by the wax slate, that *tabula rasa* upon which the Greeks etched their notes and correspondence with their slate pencils. Under the guise of a metaphor that was not Just a metaphor, therefore, the new media technology that gave rise to the soul was eventually seen as the vanishing point of this newly invented soul.

Para. 2 b) Around 1900, immediately after the development of film, it appears that there was an increase in the number of cases of mountain climbers, alpinists, and possibly also chimney-sweeps who, against the odds, survived almost fatal falls from mountains or rooftops. It may be more likely, though, that the number of cases did not increase, but rather that the number of scientists interested in them. did. In any case, a theory immediately began to circulate among physicians like Dr. Moriz Benedict and mystical anthroposophist's like Dr. Rudolf Steiner, which even you may have probably heard as a rumour. The theory stated that the so-called experience - a key philosophical concept at that time of falling (or, according to other observations, also drowning) was allegedly not terrible or frightening at all. Instead, at the moment of imminent death a rapid time-lapse film of an entire former life is projected once again in the mind's eye, although it is unclear to me whether it is supposed to run forwards or backwards. In any case, it is evident: in 1900, the soul suddenly stopped being a memory in the form of wax slates or books, as Plato describes it; rather, it was technically advanced and transformed into a motion picture.

Source: Kittler, Friedrich, and Anthony Enns. *Optical Media.* Polity, 2010. Print. 34-35.

End of paper